An Account of the Witch Craze in Salem with Reference to Some Modern Witch Crazes

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AN ACCOUNT OF THE WITCH CRAZE IN SALEM, WITH REFERENCE TO SOME MODERN WITCH CRAZES *

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Belief in witchcraft and the prosecution and execution of those accused of it have existed in all countries from the earliest times. Even now the belief is prevalent in certain parts of this state; and it is especially prevalent among the negroes of all countries. In the early days of this country such a belief seemed to be especially prevalent in the New England colonies, the first case of witchcraft occurring at Springfield, Mass., in 1645. From that date sporadic cases appeared from time to time until 1692, when the epidemic of accusation in Salem, Mass., and its vicinity occurred. During a period of four months, 250 persons were accused and put in jail. Of these, nineteen were hanged and their property confiscated. Two died in prison from exposure and bad treatment, and one was pressed to death, a pleasant mode of torture, which will be described later. It must be remembered that this represented a rather large percentage of the population at that time.

For much that is to follow I am indebted to an interesting book, entitled "Witchcraft in Salem Village," by W. S. Nevins.

ORIGIN OF WITCH CRAZE IN SALEM

The craze had its beginning in the home of the Rev. Samuel Parris, the pastor of the church in Salem. His family consisted of a daughter aged 9, a niece, Abigail Williams, aged 11, and a servant, Tituba, who was half Indian and half negro. She and her husband had come from the West Indies where belief in witchcraft was very strong. Associated with these were four other girls—Ann Putnam, 12 years old, the daughter of Thomas Putnam; Mercy Lewis, 17 years of age and a servant in his family; Elizabeth Hubbard, 17 years old and a niece of the village physician, and Sarah Churchill, aged 20, a servant in the family of George Jacobs, Sr., who, with his wife, was afterward accused. Mercy Lewis at one time had lived in the family of the Rev. George Burroughs, who was also accused. Several of these persons

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belonged to prominent families. It will be noted that some or all of them figured in all the trials, although as time went on others also became associated.

It is said that for purposes of amusement the West Indian servant used to practice tricks and incantations common among the natives of her home. During these performances they did strange and unusual things, such as getting into holes, creeping under chairs, assuming odd postures, performing various antics, making odd gestures and uttering foolish, ridiculous speeches. While it is natural for children to do such things more or less, they were not countenanced by their Puritan relatives and masters. Great, therefore, was the consternation when they learned of it. Dr. Griggs, whose niece was one of the participants, was called, and not being able to make a diagnosis, he said, "They are possessed of the devil or bewitched." This became noised about the community, causing the children to become objects of curiosity, which naturally made them show off more. The Reverend Mr. Parris called a meeting of other ministers in the neighborhood, who, after observing, investigating and praying, unanimously confirmed the diagnosis. The supposed victims were questioned and threatened with severe discipline if they did not tell who had bewitched them, and they finally accused Tituba, Sarah Good, described as "a melancholy, distracted person," and Sarah Osburn, a bedridden old woman. The three women being formally accused were arrested and taken before Magistrates Jonathan Corwin and John Hathorne, March 1, 1692. It was arranged to hold the hearing in the village tavern (a circumstance which today will be blamed by many for all that happened afterward), but this did not prove large enough, so they adjourned to the meeting house. Sarah Good, the first to be examined, was a woman, 70 years old, in poor health and with a bad temper. All writers agree that from the first the magistrates were strongly prejudiced against the accused. The testimony also was recorded by prejudiced persons, one of whom was Mr. Parris, an accuser, and, therefore, much that was favorable was omitted from the records. Part of her examination with comments of the examiners is as follows:

Q. Sarah Good, what evil spirit have you familiarity with?
A. None.
Q. Have you made no contracts with the devil?
A. None.
Q. Why do you hurt these children?
A. I do not hurt them. I scorn it.
Q. Who then do you employ to do it?
A. Nobody.

Q. What creature do you employ then?
A. No creature, but I am falsely accused.
Q. Why did you go away muttering from Mr. Parris' house?
A. I did not mutter, but thanked him for what he gave my child.
Q. Have you no contract with the devil?
A. No.

Hathorne then desired all the children to look on her and see if this was the person who hurt them, and they all did look on her and said that this was one of the persons that did torment them. Presently, they were all tormented.

Q. Sarah Good, do you not see now what you have done; why do you not tell the truth; why do you thus torment these poor children?
A. I do not torment them.
Q. Who do you employ then?
A. I employ nobody, I scorn it.
Q. How came they thus tormented?
A. What do I know? You bring others here and now you charge me with it.
Q. Why, who was it?
A. I do not know, but it was some you brought into the meeting house with you.
Q. We brought you into the meeting house?
A. But you brought two more.
Q. Who is it then that tormented the children?
A. It was Osburn.
Q. Who do you serve?
A. I serve God.
Q. What God do you serve?
A. The God that made heaven and earth.

Comment is here made, "She was not willing to mention the word 'God.' Her answers were made in a very wicked, spiteful manner, reflecting and retorting against the authority with base and abusive words, and many lies she was taken in." Personally, I am unable to agree in this with the recorder. Samuel Abbey testified that three years previously William and Sarah Good had come to dwell in his house out of charity; that he had let them dwell there until Sarah Good became "of so turbulent a spirit, spiteful and so maliciously bent" that they could not keep her any longer. Ever since that time "Sarah Good hath carried it very spitefully and maliciously toward them." After she had gone from them they began to lose cattle, several of which were lost "in an unusual manner, in a drooping condition and yet they would eat" . . . and "doth believe that they died of witchcraft." William Good had told him that he had told his wife that they had lost two cows, and she said she did not care if the Abbeys lost all their cows. Sarah Gadge testified that Sarah Good came to her house about two and a half years previously and wanted

to come in. She was told she could not because it was feared she had been with them that had smallpox, whereupon Good fell to muttering and scolding. The next morning her cows died in a sudden, terrible, strange and unusual manner so that some of the neighbors said and the deponent did believe it to be done by witchcraft.

It was here stated that Sarah's husband William had said she was either a witch or would be one very quickly. Mr. Hathorne asked him his reason for saying so of her, whether he had ever seen anything by her? He answered, "No, not in this nature," but it was her bad carriage to him. "And indeed," said he, "I may say with tears that she is an enemy to all good." From this I judge that Mr. Good had been tortured, and in this wise we still have witches.

On this evidence she was indicted, or as one writer says, she was as good as indicted before the hearing—a thing which may happen even now.

TRIAL OF THE ACCUSED

The court that tried all the cases was appointed by Governor Phips. It consisted of nine members. The chief justice was William Stoughton, the deputy governor. He had been educated for the ministry and was not a lawyer. The remaining members were citizens of prominence and influence. It is stated that while the rules of procedure were similar to those of English courts, the rights of the accused were not protected as carefully as they would have been by English judges. A prominent Boston lawyer some years ago wrote as follows: "Its proceedings were absurd and outrageous throughout; all sensible rules of evidence were ignored. There never was in any community, where the English common law was the citizens' birthright, such cruel and wanton violations of right, such absolute denials of justice as at Salem in 1692." Before they were tried the accused were treated with great severity. One writer says, "The accused were treated, from the moment some babbling child uttered a suspicious word against them to the burial of their bodies after execution, with a harshness little short of brutality, and with far more severity than any evidence would indicate that persons accused of other crimes in those days were treated." They appear to have been regarded as veritable devils themselves, ready to torment anybody. The two old women just mentioned were for several weeks taken every night to the jail at Ipswich, a distance of ten miles, and brought back in the morning. They and most of the others were kept in chains, and a bill of the Boston jailer exists which reads, "To chains for Sarah Good and Sarah Osburn fourteen shillings." It is noteworthy that one of the judges, Nathaniel Saltonstall, resigned after the first trial because "he was very much dissatisfied with the proceedings of it." The accus-

ing persons are spoken of during the trials as "the afflicted." Their performances delayed them considerably and Thomas Newton, the prosecuting attorney, wrote to the clerk of the court, "I fear we shall not this week try all we have sent for, by reason the trials will be tedious, and the afflicted persons cannot readily give their testimony, being struck dumb and senseless for a season."

While all of the testimony is interesting reading, I have tried to detail only that which seems to be of medical and psychologic interest.

At Sarah Good's trial, Elizabeth Hubbard, one of the afflicted, said she saw the apparition of Sarah Good "biting, pricking, pinching and almost choking me to death," and that she had continued to do so until March 1, the day of her hearing. She had also seen the apparition of Sarah Good afflict Elizabeth Parris, Abigail Williams, Ann Putnam and Sarah Vibber. During the trial she was afflicted and saw the accused with invisible hands take a censer off the table and carry it outdoors.

Sarah Vibber, a woman 36 years old, said that Good tortured Mercy Lewis, April 11, and herself, May 2, by pressing her breath almost out, and also afflicted her infant so that she and Vibber could not hold it. Since then the apparition of Sarah Good had pinched, beaten, choked and pricked her with pins. Subsequently, Good's apparition came into her room one night, pulled down the clothes and looked at her four year old child, and it had a great fit. It will be noticed that this woman was not afflicted until two months after the accused was arrested. During the trial one of the witnesses cried out that Good had stabbed her and had broken the knife blade in so doing. The blade was taken from her clothes where she said she had been stabbed, whereupon a man arose who stated he had broken that very knife the previous day and thrown away the blade. He then produced the remaining part. It was shown that the girl had deliberately picked up the blade and placed it in the bosom of her dress. Sarah Good was convicted and hanged, July 19. As she stood on the scaffold the Reverend Mr. Noyes said to her, "You are a witch and you know you are a witch."

Sarah Osburn was an invalid and confined to her bed most of the time. Three people declared that she had said she was more likely to be bewitched than to be a witch. She was asked what made her say this and she replied that she was frightened one time in her sleep, and either saw or dreamed she saw a thing like an Indian, all black, which did pinch her in the neck and pulled her by the back part of her head to the door of the house. If Freud and his disciples had lived then, they could no doubt have decided her guilt or innocence by an analysis of this dream. She was sent to jail in Boston, and there died from exposure and ill treatment.

Martha Corey, a very intelligent woman, about 60 years of age, was arrested and had her first hearing March 21, 1692. It is stated that she denounced the witchcraft accusations from the beginning. Ann Putnam was her principal accuser, but she was well supported by all the others. Two of the inquisitors first paid her a visit and endeavored by cross-questioning and brow-beating to obtain a confession, but without success. One of the strongest points against her, according to them, was that on their way to visit her they had called on Ann Putnam and asked her to describe the clothes Martha had on when she made her spectral visits. Ann stated that she had just made one of these calls, but had so blinded her that she could not see what clothes she wore. When, however, they were questioning the accused, she inquired "if the afflicted had attempted to describe her clothes." This they claimed showed supernatural wisdom on her part. As a matter of fact, it was a proper question as in all previous cases the clothing worn when they made their visits had been described. They also made much of her statement that "she did not believe there were any witches." A sample of the examination at her first hearing is:

Hathorne. You are now in the hands of authority. Tell me now why do you hurt these persons?

A. I do not.

Hathorne. Who doth?

A. Pray give me leave to go to prayer.

Hathorne. We do not send for you to go to prayer, but tell me why you hurt these.

A. I am an innocent person. I never had to do with witchcraft since I was born. I am a gospel woman.

Hathorne. How could you tell then that the child was bid to observe what clothes you wore when some one came to speak with you? (Cheever interrupted and bade her not begin with a lie.)

Hathorne. Who told you that?

A. He said the child said—

Cheever. You speak falsely.

Hathorne. Why did you ask if the child asked what clothes you wore?

A. My husband told me the others told.

Hathorne. Goodman Corey, did you tell her?

The old man denied that he had.

Hathorne. Did you not say that your husband told you?

No answer.

Hathorne. How dare you lie to this assembly? You are now before authority. I expect the truth. You promised it. Speak now, and tell who told you what clothes.

A. Nobody.

During this one of the children exclaimed that a man was whispering in Martha's ear. She was asked, "what did he say to you?" Her reply was, "We must not believe all that these distracted children say."

The Reverend Mr. Parris in his report writes: "It was noted when she bit her lip, several of the afflicted were bitten. When her hands were at liberty the afflicted were pinched." It was asked, "Do you not see that these women and children are rational and sober when your hands are fastened?" Immediately they were seized with fits and the bystanders said she was squeezing her fingers. Some one exclaimed, "She hath bit her lip, and immediately the afflicted were in an uproar." During this examination she was badgered by every one present, especially by the Reverend Mr. Noyes. A Mrs. Pope threw her muff at her and followed it with her shoe which struck her on the head. This woman was an important witness in several cases and subsequently acknowledged her error. Mrs. Corey was hanged, September 22, previous to which she was excommunicated by the Reverend Parris and two deacons of the church. Shortly after Giles Corey, her husband, 80 years old, was arrested. He had testified against his wife. During his examination the afflicted suffered so much from fits and pinches that his hands had to be tied. When he turned his head to one side, their heads were likewise turned, and when he drew in his cheeks, their cheeks were sucked in. What was considered strong evidence was given by a 16-year-old boy, who said that about August 20, Giles Corey told him that he wanted some platters as he was going to have a feast. . . . He took them and carried them away, being gone about a half hour, then he brought them back, went away and said nothing. It was believed that it was not Giles Corey in the flesh who had either borrowed or returned them. At his trial in September he refused to plead, or "stood mute," as the law termed it. For this he was pressed to death. This consisted in laying the victim naked on his back on a hard floor and placing on his body "as great a weight of iron as he could bear and more." He was given on the first day three morsels of the worst bread, and on the second day three draughts of standing water that should be near the prison door, and in this situation this should be alternately his daily diet until he either answered or died. He lived two days. This is said to be the only case in which this law was enforced in New England.

Rebecca Nurse was the mother of eight children and in good circumstances. She was accused of sundry acts of witchcraft directed toward Mrs. Ann Putnam, Ann Putnam, Jr., and Abigail Williams. Her formal accusers were Thomas and Edward Putnam. During the hearing Mrs. Ann Putnam cried out, "Did you not bring the black man with you? Did you not bid me tempt God and die? How often have you eat and drunk your own damnation?" To this the accused replied, "O Lord help me," and spread out her hands, whereupon it is recorded that "the afflicted were grievously vexed." Her answers to all questions were particularly straightforward and sensible. When asked if

she thought the afflicted suffered against their wills or not, she replied that she did not think they suffered against their wills, and she did not believe they were bewitched. She was asked why she had not visited the afflicted. She answered that she was afraid she would have fits also, whereupon all the afflicted had fits abundantly. Every time she moved her hands the afflicted persons were seized with violent fits of torture. If she held her head to one side the afflicted also held theirs, and one of them had her neck set in that position. Seeing this, another cried out, "Set up Goody Nurse's head, the maid's neck will be broken." When some one set up Nurse's head it was observed that the afflicted one's was immediately righted.

At her trial it was claimed that she had a "witch mark" on her body. A jury of women was appointed to examine her. They disagreed, some very properly claiming that the mark was due to natural causes. The prisoner herself said that she could give "a sufficient known reason of the moving cause thereof," and asked to be examined by another jury, which request was apparently not granted. Two women also sent a statement to the court as follows: "We whose names are underwritten can testify if called to it, that Goody Nurse has been troubled with an infirmity of body for many years, which the juries of women seem to be afraid it should be something else."

The following written statement sent to the court by John Tarbell is of interest:

> John Tarbell being at the house of Thomas Putnam upon the 28th day of March, 1692, upon discourse of many things, I asked whether the girl that was afflicted did first speak of Goody Nurse, before others mentioned her to her. They said she told them she saw the apparition of a pale faced woman, that sat in her grandmother's seat but did not know her name. Then I replied and said, but who was it that told her that it was Goody Nurse? Mercy Lewis said it was Goody Putnam that said it was Goody Nurse; Goody Putnam said it was Mercy Lewis that told her; thus they turned it upon one another, saying it was you and it was you that told her. This was before any was afflicted at Thomas Putnam's house besides his daughter and that they told his daughter it was Goody Nurse.

A verdict of not guilty was rendered, whereupon all the accusers in court cried out with renewed vigor, and were seized with violent fits, rolling and tumbling about, creating a scene of the wildest confusion. The judges told the jury that they had not carefully considered one expression of the prisoner, i. e., that when a confessing witch was brought as witness against her she said, "What do you bring her? She is one of us." Even then they could not agree on a verdict of guilty, but returned to the courtroom and asked the prisoner to explain the remark. She made no reply, whereupon they found her guilty. It later appeared that she was deaf and had not heard the question. When she was made to understand it she stated that she had meant the witness was a fellow prisoner. This explanation, a per-

fectly good one, was never told the jury. Her conviction was forced by the court which should have protected her interests. She was sentenced to be hanged, but was reprieved by the governor. The church thereupon excommunicated her, and the afflicted renewed their clamor and symptoms. This, together with the influence of some Salem people, caused him to withdraw the reprieve and she was duly hanged. It is noteworthy that the Rev. George Burroughs, who was accused and executed, had had a financial dispute with the Putnams, who were active as his accusers, and their daughter Ann was the most important witness against him.

At the trial of Bridget Bishop, the Rev. John Hale testified that the wife of John Trask desired of him that Bridget Bishop be not permitted to receive the Lord's Supper because "she did entertain certain people in her house at unseasonable hours in the night to keep drinking and playing at shovel board whereby discord did arise in the other families and young people were in danger of being corrupted." He greatly feared that if a stop had not been put to these disorders Edward Bishop's house would have been one of great profaneness and iniquity. It was later said that on the night Mrs. Trask made this complaint she became distracted and remained so until she died. Other records show that she was insane and committed suicide by cutting her throat. George Jacobs, Sr., a well-to-do man of 70 years, was accused by his servant, Sarah Churchill, one of the original accusers. The principal evidence against him was his inability to repeat the Lord's Prayer. His son George Jacobs, Jr., and his wife and daughter were shortly after arrested. The son escaped, but his wife was kept in irons for eight months and then acquitted. The daughter to save herself, confessed that she was a witch, and testified against her grandfather who was hanged. She afterward confessed that she had been made to do this. Part of the confession is as follows:

> The Lord above knows I know nothing in the least measure how or who afflicted them, they told me without doubt I did, or else they would not fall down at me. They told me if I would not confess I should be put down into the dungeon and would be hanged, but if I would confess I should have my life. The which did so affright me with my own vile, wicked heart, to save my life made me make the like confession I did. Which confession may it please the honored court, is altogether false and untrue.

At the trial of Elizabeth Procter the court addressed the affected ones as follows:

> Mary Walcott, doth this woman hurt you? Ans. I never saw her so as to be hurt.
>
> Mercy Lewis, doth she hurt you? (Her mouth was stopped.)
>
> Ann Putnam, doth she hurt you? (She could not speak.)
>
> Abigail Williams, doth she hurt you? (Her hand was thrust in her own mouth.)

Later, Abigail Williams and Ann Putnam were again spoken to by the court, but neither of them could make any answer by reason of dumbness or other fits. By and by they cried out, "Look you there is Goody Procter on the beam," which statement was followed by the accusing of John Procter, the husband, who had come with his wife to court. At their trial the following evidence was given by Elizabeth Booth:

> On the 8th of June Hugh Jones appeared to me and told me that Elizabeth Procter killed him because he had had a pot of cider of her which he had not paid for. On June 8th Elizabeth Shaw appeared unto me that Elizabeth Procter and John Williams killed her because she did not use those doctors she advised her to. . . . Ye wife of John Fuller appeared unto me and told me that Elizabeth Procter killed her because she would not give her apples when she sent for some. . . . The apparitions of Law Shapling and Doc Zerubabel Endicott said Elizabeth Proctor killed them, and the apparition of Robert Stone, Senior, told her that John Procter and his wife killed him, and at the same time Robert Stone, Jr., appeared and said Procter and his wife killed him because he took his father's part.

John Bailey testified to seeing the Procters standing at the door of their house (at which time they were in jail), and after getting a mile from it he became speechless for a time, also that after alighting from his horse he saw a woman coming toward him, but that when he got on his horse again "there stood a cow where I saw the woman." As evidence against John Procter it was stated that at the beginning of the witchcraft prosecutions he had said in reference to the afflicted that he could whip the devil out of them, which seems to be a very reasonable statement, and probably would have caused the witches to vanish. A man stated that he had heard one of the accusing girls say that she had cried out against Goodman Procter for sport. "The girls must have some sport," she added. He testified in his defense that five persons, one of them his son, had been tied neck and heels until the blood came from their noses, in an effort to have them confess. John Procter was hanged; Elizabeth was condemned, but not executed. A family by the name of Wilkins having considerable illness sent for Mercy Lewis and Mary Walcott (heretofore active as accusers) to ascertain the cause. They promptly saw the apparitions of Sarah Buckley and John Willard on the throat and breast of Henry Wilkins. Willard was promptly arrested. At his trial, Ann Putnam testified that the shapes of Samuel Fuller and Lydia Wilkins had appeared in winding sheets and told her, "If I did not go and tell Mr. Hathorne (a magistrate) that John Willard had murdered them they would tear me to pieces." He was hanged.

Martha Carrier, a woman 40 years old, was arrested with four of her children. During her trial "the tortures of the afflicted were so great, that there was no enduring it, so that she was ordered away to

be bound hand and foot, the afflicted in the meantime almost killed. As soon as she was bound they all had strange and sudden cease." Her daughter, 8 years old, testified against her, saying she had been a witch since the age of 6 and her mother made her so. Her son, aged 18, also testified that he had been "in the devil's snare," and that one of his brothers was also. A neighbor stated that after some dispute with her, he had been taken with a swelling in his foot and subsequently had two sores in the groin. The swelling was lanced, and a large amount of corruption came away. The very day that Goodwife Carrier was arrested, he began to get better. Therefore "he had great cause to think that she had a hand in his sickness." She was hanged.

The first charge against Elizabeth How, said to be a kind and charitable woman, was made by a girl 10 years old, whose parents had previously had a dispute with the How family concerning some lumber. At her trial, it was stated this girl had told reputable people "that if she did complain of Elizabeth How in her fits she did not know that she did so," and that they had heard her brother tell her to say that Goodwife How was a witch. In spite of this she was hanged.

At the trial of Susanna Martin, one of her neighbors said that her reason for believing her a witch was her great neatness. For this she was hanged.

Mary Easty was released after trial. Two days after her discharge, Mercy Lewis had a fit. Ann Putnam was sent for to tell who afflicted Mercy. She and Abigail Williams visited her and declared they saw Mary Easty and John Willard (before mentioned) afflicting her body. She was rearrested at midnight and taken to jail, loaded with chains and finally executed.

Abigail Hobbs, who apparently was not well balanced, declared that while in jail Burroughs (later executed) come to her "in his body person," bringing of a half dozen girls for her to afflict by sticking thorns into them, and when she pricked them the real girls cried out with pain and she heard them. She also felt the hand of Burroughs on her arm. In conclusion, she stated that she had killed both boys and girls. She also accused her mother and father. They denied the charge, but after repeated questioning the mother finally confessed that she was a witch and that her husband was also.

Mary Warren, who had been one of the accusers of John Procter, before mentioned, and had testified in other early cases, later said that the afflicted "did but dissemble." The other girls then cried out against her and she was arrested. Part of the record of her examination is as follows:

> After continuing in a fit for some time she said, "I will speak, O, I am sorry for it, I am sorry for it." Wringing her hands she fell into another fit. Then attempting a little later to speak, her teeth were set. She fell

into another fit and shouted, "O, Lord help me, O, good Lord save me," then afterward cried again, "I will tell, I will tell," and then fell into a dead fit again. . . . She said, "I must not speak a word, but I will speak, I will speak, Satan. . . . Avoid Satan, for the name of God, avoid." She then fell into fits again.

She was later released and resumed her occupation of testifying.

Rebecca Eames, while a spectator at some of the executions, was accused by a woman of sticking a pin into her foot and of bewitching her. She was arrested and later confessed that she was a witch. She was sentenced, but not executed. In October, 1692, a new court was appointed which was even more in sympathy with the prosecutions than the preceding one had been. That there might be no question as to their right to hang witches, they had the Colonial statute against witchcraft reenacted, and a few months later reenforced it with the English statute. In spite of this they could not get juries to convict. Two reasons have been given for this; one, because the wife of a clergyman previously active in the prosecutions was accused, the other because "the juries who tried cases in 1692 were composed of freemen only, while those of 1693 were chosen from among all those inhabitants who possessed the requisite amount of property to qualify them as electors under the new charter. Freemen were necessarily church members and not as likely to act independently as the jurors selected from the whole body of the people." Protests began to be made by various communities, and the last three convicted and sentenced were not executed. In May, 1693, Governor Phips issued a proclamation releasing from custody all persons, about 150, held on the charge.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE OUTBREAK

A number of writers have discussed the psychology of this outbreak, notably, Lecky, Munsterberg, Beard and Kittredge. To me, it seems comparatively simple. It was due to hysteria, fomented by religious fanaticism and lying, some possibly of the pathologic type, but most of it malicious. It must be borne in mind that the Puritans were a fanatical and bigoted people, who persecuted vigorously all those who did not agree with their religious convictions. In spite of the fact that they themselves had come to this country to escape persecution on account of their religion, in Salem Quaker women had been dragged half naked through the streets at the tail of a cart and whipped. Baron Pollock, an English lawyer wrote, "It is probable that but for the persecution of heretics, there would have been no persecution of sorcerers." These people led a more or less repressed life and were therefore ripe for any orgy when the opportunity came.

One writer has suggested that much of the evidence was due to hypnotism. In only one instance does this seem likely, i. e., the young

girl who testified against Elizabeth How, said she did not remember making the charge. All the others did remember everything they said and did.

A number of symptoms of hysteria were present. The influence of suggestion and the morbid desire for notoriety are apparent. In each succeeding trial the symptoms became more pronounced and bizarre. Mimicry was frequent, and in one case possibly a hysterical contracture was present. Some had areas of anesthesia and hyperesthesia. These symptoms were encouraged maliciously by older people. It is noteworthy that many of the accused had had difficulties, either legal or otherwise, with their neighbors, or were more or less public nuisances. Also many confessed to being witches and testified against the accused because it was known that those who did so would not be executed. It is also evident that in some cases torture was used to get confessions. Hutchinson, in his history of Massachusetts, writes, "The whole was a scene of fraud and imposture, begun by young girls who at first perhaps thought of nothing more than being pitied and indulged, and continued by adult persons who were afraid of being accused themselves." Many of the active instigators of these prosecutions afterward acknowledged their error, and expressed regret. This did not, however, help those who had suffered.

MODERN WITCH CRAZES

I suppose most people will say that such a thing could not occur today. I believe that it is not only possible, but to a certain extent is already occurring. We are doing many things similar to what these people did. George M. Beard, in his book, "The Psychology of the Salem Witchcraft Excitement in 1692," writes, "that he who should on a wager contract to excite the American people through the emotions, and in that way convert them to any doctrine within three months, and to a denial of the same doctrine within another three months, could if he were moderately skilful, gain his contract and win his wager." This was written about forty years ago, but it is more true today. The people of Salem and its vicinity were justified in believing in witchcraft. Its existence was generally taught by clergymen and others whose opinions were entitled to respect. Where they erred was in depriving the accused of their legal rights, in treating them with unusual severity and in refusing to consider evidence in their favor. Cotton Mather who, as is well known, was one of the most influential men in the colony, wrote to the judges to exercise great care and not to convict on spectral evidence alone. He further stated, "It is certain that devils have sometimes represented the shapes of persons not only innocent, but very virtuous." No attention was paid to this, and convictions were repeatedly secured on this evidence,

which was contrary to all the rules of evidence then maintaining. The uproar at the trial of Rebecca Nurse puts one in mind of the newspaper accounts some months ago of the hearing on the question of Sunday music in this city before a committee of the legislature. It is said that speakers in favor of the measure were hissed, villified and their voices drowned in the uproar made by the opponents, largely composed of clergymen. In spite of the facts that concerts on Sunday evening are held in many American cities without evident damage to the population and that certain religious denominations are not opposed to them, statements were made of which this is a sample: "People who recently have come to these shores from lands overrun by bolshevism are the principal opponents to the blue laws." Is this true? When the park commission allowed the playing of baseball in the park on Sunday a well known clergyman at a public meeting characterized it as "anarchy and bolshevism of the worst kind," also that "the park commission have not only broken the Sabbath day, but have committed a very serious offense to our nation, to its laws and the great democracy that endeavors to set an example before the world." When he said this he probably knew that in many places in our nation baseball is played on Sunday, not only for pleasure, but also for gain. We are now suffering from a surfeit of legislation and proposed legislation regulating our habits, our business, in fact, practically everything good or bad that a person is liable to do. To quote a recent editorial:

> Getting a legislature to act upon all manner of essentially personal and petty questions is perfectly easy. This state solemnly forbids playing any game of cards in a public resort. That one forbids buying a cigar on Sunday. A number have gravely dealt with the portentious question of giving tips. Every winter produces a sheaf of bills to regulate women's dress. Getting any state to attend to such matters as how and when a kimono shall be worn, or the length and cut of bathing suits, is perfectly easy. . . . But getting a legislature ever to consider public questions of large importance is difficult. . . . Where the law requires a washerwoman's cook stove to be assessed, and a millionaire's wife's diamonds are not assessed, the legislature is deeply engaged with the censorship of moving pictures. Where mob murders are a well recognized institution, the legislature is passing an act to regulate the length of hat pins.

A special target for suppression by legislative enactment seems to be anything which may add to the pleasure and relaxation of the individual. Not long ago, a clergyman publicly stated that moving pictures are one of the biggest menaces leading to vice in this country. To this end we have numbers of societies whose mission is to regulate some one particular thing and that are the instigators of much of this sort of legislation. Not only this, but there are societies whose mission is to regulate public and private institutions, private business,

education; in fact, nothing escapes. The prevailing motto seems to be, Attend to everybody's business but your own, and the less you know about the business you are regulating, the better. To quote Henry Watterson:

> Under the pretense of liberalizing the government, politicians are sacrificing its organic character to whimsical experimentation, its checks and balances, wisely designed to promote and protect liberty, are being loosened by schemes of reform more or less visionary; while nowhere do we find intelligence enlightened by experience, and conviction supported by self control, interposing to save the representative system of the Constitution from the onward march of the proletariat. . . . When they have not gone skylarking or have grown tired of bridge they devote their leisure to organizing clubs other than those of the uplift. There are all sorts, from the Society for the Abrogation of Bathing Suits at the seaside resorts to the league over at Mewville for the care of disabled cats. Most of these clubs are all officers and no privates. That is what many of them are made for. Do they advance the world in grace? One who surveys the scene can scarcely think so.

While many of these organizations are public nuisances, others when properly conducted do much good. Their usefulness is often impaired by lack of tact and respect for the rights and feelings of those to be benefited. This is often due to the lack of knowledge of the world and its people possessed by those who carry on the work. It may be illustrated by a story said to be true:

> A wealthy lady entertained some poor children in her neighborhood. During the afternoon one of them asked her if her husband drank, to which she replied, "He takes a drink now and then but never to excess." Then the child asked, "Does he ever beat you?" The lady, becoming very indignant, exclaimed, "Child, how dare you ask me such a question?" Whereupon the child answered, "My mother told me before I came here to act like a perfect lady, and that is what I heard you ask her."

The feelings of many of these objects of solicitude seem to be well described in the following verses appearing in a daily paper not long ago:

> Oh, a workman who was weeping with despair,
> Cried, "The women's clubs have tracked me to my lair.
> I will flee the whole caboodle
> In this land of Yankee Doodle
> Where there's nothing but compulsion everywhere.
>
> "They will legislate the pattern of my shoes.
> They will censor my amusements and my news.
> I can have no more endurance
> With their plans for new insurance
> Which will eat my little income up with dues.
>
> "Oh! I am weary of the struggle and the strife
> Gainst this most efficient legislated life.
> For my uplift they are burning,
> While I am all their efforts spurning,
> Ere they make me wed a legislated wife."

Many of these organizations and individuals who are ambitious to have the world run according to their ideas, in order to gain their ends are guilty of false and reckless statements, of advocating the confiscation of legally owned property, of breaking laws themselves in order to capture those who in their opinion are breaking laws, and of villifying and slandering those opposed to them. We have heard that those who prosecuted the witches in Salem were guilty of many of these things, and it seems probable that with a little more power the modern regulators will advocate the electric chair for those who differ from them. A still more serious thing is that those whose duty it is to enforce the law engage in orgies of persecution in which people's rights are trampled on with impunity and much injustice is done, frequently without redress. Russia in the days of the czar had something to learn. We are going on the theory if one person may be made good (who does not want to be) it is proper to make thousands miserable. To emphasize these statements, let me abstract some of the news appearing in the daily papers of the past few years. They are not isolated cases, a book could easily be filled with similar ones. July 26, 1918, a public, licensed hotel in the center of the city was raided on the ground that it was a resort for immoral people. At the time, the officers smashed down doors, ripped out transoms and broke open trunks in the search for evidence. They arrested forty or fifty men and women, not only those who were in the place, but those who were on the street in the vicinity. When tried the first time, the proprietor was convicted, but the judge promptly gave him a new trial, and stated:

> No man had the right or justification to break into another man's house, commit depredation, or rummage through his personal belongings without a warrant, even if he knows he will find incriminating evidence. Any man who breaks into another man's house without a warrant and accuses that man of violation of the law, in the same breath admits he has violated the law himself.

At the next trial he was acquitted. The trial judge (not the one who conducted the first trial) in his charge said:

> This raid was conducted in a high handed and illegal manner. . . . These agents took it upon themselves to disregard the law and the rights of citizens, to engage in an unlawful and unwarranted act.

Such performances are supported by people supposed to be law abiding. One may ask what will happen when they secure judges who will do their bidding.

About the same time, three women, each about 60 years old, were arrested for frequenting an immoral resort (their own home). The only evidence was that one of them had three sons in the Navy. A man, enlisted in the Navy, at the instigation of the federal law enforcing officer for the suppression of vice, telephoned her, claiming to be

a shipmate of the sons, and asking leave to call. This he did with a companion. After two of the women had gone to their rooms to dress, the men forced themselves into their rooms. Others who were waiting outside then forced themselves into the house and arrested the women. They were acquitted, the trial judge characterizing the case as one of the most outrageous he had ever heard of.

In Newark, N. J., not long ago, policewomen were ordered to forcibly wash the faces of any girls on the street with painted cheeks, and to have them photographed as vampires.

In New York, in 1918, a wave of hysterical morality caused the raiding of public hotels, apartment houses, restaurants and billiard rooms, with the arresting, without warrants, of 1,100 people. All this to find possible hidden vice. Shortly after Rodman Wanamaker, special deputy police commissioner, advised the use of women to act as police spies in the following way:

> Women of character and ability can be easily found to volunteer for this work. . . . It can be extended . . . so as to have in every block of inhabited territory in this city a woman in charge, whose post it would be and whose duty it should be to keep that block clean and wholesome by becoming acquainted with every person and condition existing therein and reporting as may be directed by the police commissioner everything unlawful or irregular coming to her. notice.

A delicate tribute to a well-known characteristic of many women. According to the papers the services of the emergency aides were offered in this city for such work.

About two years ago, a so-called vice crusade was instigated in Wilkesbarre by the chamber of commerce there. It was afterward stated by one of the detectives employed for the work that the chamber of commerce had supplied him with $10,000 to be used in luring innocent girls to houses of ill-fame and otherwise to test the vice conditions of the city.

Recently a prominent aviator of the United States Army, Lieutenant Maynard, was quoted by the Anti-Saloon League as saying that a large number of the casualties which occurred in the recent transcontinental race were caused by flying with hangovers or when drunk. This was published far and wide by the newspapers and a sensation made of it. A frequent heading was "Booze Knocked out Transcontinental Fliers." This was absolutely denied by the gentleman in question. He said that his real statement was, "Many accidents in aviation are caused by the use of intoxicants," and that the Anti-Saloon League had deliberately juggled this to suit their own purposes.

Many of the active advocates of prohibition advocated practical confiscation of the property of those engaged in the manufacture and sale of alcoholic drinks, and also that of private owners. Whatever one may think of the merits or demerits of prohibition, sane people

must recognize that those engaged in a previously legal and exceedingly old business should be dealt with fairly. In this country during the war tavern keepers who had paid a license and whose capital was invested in their business were compelled to close without compensation, when located within certain prescribed areas. England when she did this under like conditions compensated all such.

Certain organizations, which after spending large sums of money to make this country dry, are now, according to the papers, raising large sums to put the world in a similar fix. Yet when a well known newspaper man borrowed money from some brewers in order to purchase a newspaper it was made the subject of a congressional investigation.

In Virginia, as part of the operation of the search and seizure act of that state, we find that police opened the coffin containing the body of a well known person that was being transported by railroad through the state. Women in sleeping cars had their berths searched by male officers while occupied by them, and a number of suspects were shot and killed.

Tobacco is at present in serious danger of execution for witchcraft. Interesting, if not true, are the statements of the Rev. Clarence True Wilson (there should be a question mark after the middle name), who is secretary of the temperance board of the Methodist church: "The cigarette impaired the health of two million soldiers of our Army. We have been sold out by the White House band to the tobacco trust. . . . The American Tobacco Company sent to the soldiers in France doped cigarettes which succeeded in making many of them virtual dope fiends, unable to fight for two hours without collapsing unless they had their smokes." Cigarets had to be pushed into the mouths of the trembling soldiers before they could go over the top, and ignorant doctors called this shell shock. So far as known, these statements have not been denied by newspapers or medical journals.

In a number of states, the sale, and even the smoking, of cigarets is unlawful. In Kansas, newspapers and magazines advertising them cannot be publicly sold. In this same state the superintendent of public instruction (a woman) has forbade the employment of male teachers who use them. Fortunately for education in Kansas, she did not say anything about the female teachers.

It is of interest to note that in Nebraska, for some time a very dry state, where cigarets are prohibited, and where a bill was proposed in the legislature making it a penal offense to have the odor of an alcoholic drink on the breath, not long ago the governor was nearly murdered and the court house burned in Omaha by a mob who wished to and eventually did lynch a negro accused of a certain crime, but not yet

proved guilty. Also in Oklahoma with similar laws, a United States senator was driven from the stage with eggs in one of its towns while attempting to make a speech against the League of Nations.

It will be found by investigation that most lynchings and other outbreaks of mob violence occur in states most prone to freak legislation. This seems to show the lack of mental balance of the people. A member of Congress is recently quoted as stating that there were 80,000 drug addicts in the first draft, and that they were all rejected. The second report of the Provost-Marshall General says that of 3,208,446 men examined, 2,007 were rejected for drugs and alcohol — quite a difference.

In a Missouri mining town a few years ago, 700 foreign born laborers were driven away from their homes by American born miners armed with shotguns, who insisted that all foreign born miners must leave.

During the late war our hysterical temperament was strongly manifested; and when started our antipathy for anything German was much stronger and is now much stronger than in those countries that suffered most from the war. It may be remembered that during the summer of 1918, when it was requested not to use automobiles on Sundays, a gentleman in a nearby town took his wife, who was a cripple, to church in his motor car. While he was in church, a mob cut his tires, emptied his gasoline tanks, damaged his car and subjected him to verbal abuse. The newspapers were full of accounts of physical and other abuse inflicted on those who did not subscribe to liberty bonds. In some cases possibly there was reason for this; in others there was not. In a town in Nebraska, a hall which had been used before the war as a meeting place for German societies was burned during the war by incendiaries, and the fire department made no effort to save it.

One of the results of this peculiar mental state, which I have tried to show now afflicts many of the people of this country, is the meddling with the management of institutions, such as prisons and hospitals for the insane, especially the former. The officials of these institutions are very much in the position of the Salem witches, and are subjected to all sorts of accusation and abuse, usually by people who have no practical knowledge of the subject at all, sometimes by those who have, but who, courting notoriety, want to be right with the crowd. The newspapers, without knowledge of the facts, take great delight in making a sensation of the most trivial charges.

What joy the sob sisters must have received from this account published in a daily paper, concerning a gentleman (we must call them so now-a-days) who was in the highway robbery business (now very popular) and departed this life by suicide in a penal institution not

long since. "Billy loved life too much ever to attempt suicide," said the youngest sister as she sobbed on the shoulder of her older sister. "No one can tell us he killed himself. He had too much 'pep,' and too much to live for."

No doubt there are still many people who need to be separated from their valuables by use of the sandbag and other gentle means of persuasion.

A PLEA FOR SANITY

Possibly some may call me an iconoclast. I am not. I believe heartily in all measures that help the poor and unfortunate, provided, as I have already said, the advocates of these measures and those who carry them out, act with decency and common sense, and not as hysterics and notoriety seekers. Social service, for instance, is a grand thing when it is not secret police service, as for example, when some years ago I was requested, almost ordered, to send a widow, aged 40 years, to the hospital for the insane because she drank beer with men. Needless to say I refused. The same may be said of a number of other organizations and measures. They are useful when sane.

I have tried to show that much is done now in the name of law, order and uplift that is not sane. Dr. Lloyd, at a meeting of this society a few months ago said: "The various crazes of today are an evidence of the unsettled minds of the community." They are therefore legitimate subjects for the attention of this society. Not a little of freak legislation is proposed by medical men, which makes it doubly important that we as medical men and women who study especially mental diseases, endeavor to guide such minds, both medical and lay, into proper channels.

To my mind these are serious days, and anything which promotes morbid and hysterical mental states is dangerous, and worthy of our earnest consideration. Otherwise, we may have a witch craze on our hands that will make that of Salem appear very small, indeed. To quote again Henry Watterson:

> Bigotry is a disease. The bigot pursuing his narrow round is like the bedridden possessed by his disordered fancy. It sees nothing but itself, which it mistakes for wisdom and virtue. But it also begets hypocrisy. When this spreads over a sufficient area and counts a voting majority it sends its agents abroad, and thus we acquire canting apostles and legislators at once corrupt and despotic. . . . The worst of it is that there seems nowhere any popular realization—scarcely any popular outcry. . . . In a nation of undiscriminating voters the voice of the agitator is apt to drown the voice of the stateman.